



SAFETY DISPATCH

WINTER 2013

CHECK IT OUT

The acid in your stomach is strong enough to dissolve razorblades. Hydrochloric acid, the type found in your stomach, is not only good at dissolving your dinner but can also eat through many types of metal. We do not condone ingesting such things, *even if you do have an iron stomach.*



“A lot of people like snow. I find it to be an unnecessary freezing of water.” - Carl Reiner

WINTER HIGHLIGHTS
FREE FLU SHOTS available at Rite Aid with your City ID
CITYFIT EVENTS, City.Fit@Pittsburghpa.gov or call 255-2383:
 • **PERSONAL NUTRITION COACHING**, back by popular demand, starting January 26th
 • **VENTURE OUTDOORS** ongoing registration
CHARITABLE EVENTS:
 • **BLOOD DRIVE**, February 11th @ the City-County Building between 8am & 1pm. Go to www.centralbloodbank.org to register

Indoor Air Quality

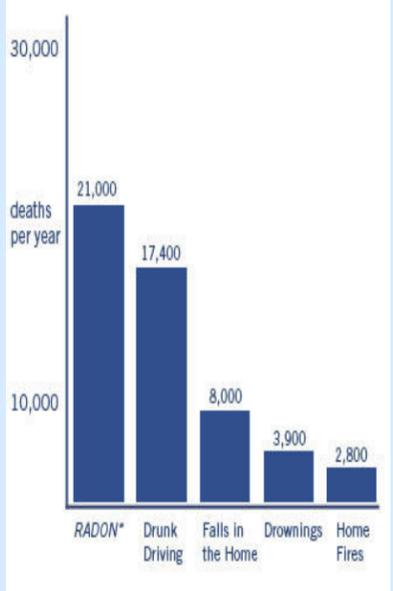
Indoor air pollution is a lot like outdoor air pollution except that it's indoors where hazardous particulates and gasses can concentrate in your home and cause health problems. Unless they are built with special mechanical means of ventilation, homes that are well-insulated may not let air "leak" in or out, adding to indoor air pollution. In winter we drastically reduce the amount of outdoor air that enters our homes for warmth, so pollutants can even build up in homes that are normally considered "leaky".

To leak or not to leak...that is the question.

Pollutants can include: pollen, last year's leftover fruitcake, tobacco smoke, spouses, cleaning products/pesticides, building materials (such as glues, asbestos & lead), mold, stinky sneakers, and pet dander.

What's The Bottom Line?

Each day you inhale about 15,000 more quarts of air per day than water (2 quarts per day). Most individuals spend 90% of their time indoors, so your body interacts with over 13,500 quarts of indoor air and their contaminants per day.



source: www.epa.gov

WINTER SAFETY TIPS

Radon: January is National Radon Action Month

Radon is an odorless gas created as a result of the natural breakdown of uranium in soil, rock, and water. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the United States and kills more than drunk driving or spontaneous combustion. Radon can enter homes and buildings through cracks in the floors, walls, or foundations. Radon can also be in your water, especially well water. Testing is the only way to know if your home has elevated radon levels.

So get your home tested for radon. The American Lung Association provides information on radon and radon test kits. Supplies or free test kits* are available for Pennsylvania residents who have not yet tested their homes (check out www.lung.org).

**While supplies last.*



Photo taken on Pitt's campus between the Cathedral of Learning and Main Library



Candles are Still Open Flames

Even though we live in the 21st century, many people insist on using 5,000 year old technology such as candles, especially around the holidays. They do provide pleasant aromas and create ambiance, but don't forget they are little fires and an average of 32 home fires occurred per day between 2006 and 2010, so follow these steps:

- Step 1: Select a sturdy surface away from curtains;
- Step 2: Unclutter the surface where candles are to be lit;
- Step 3: Place candle in a holders if not already in a jar;
- Step 4: Light candle (may we suggest enjoying it responsibly with red wine and some mood music?);
- Step 5: Blow out candles when you leave the room or go to bed (make sure to do it with purpose or your wish won't come true!)

Try attractive candles run by batteries. They may not provide pleasant *olfactory hues*, yet are much safer.

Carbon Monoxide stars in the Tale of the Invisible Killer

The last time we met our villain (Codename: CO), he was succeeding in his evil plot to kill 150 Americans per year by hiding undetected in ordinary consumer products. His signature method: silently, colorlessly, odorlessly (yeah, it's a word we just made up, so?), attacking unsuspecting victims with headaches, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness, and sometimes even death. CO's arch nemesis and our Hero, Safety Awareness, is formulating a plan to thwart him by spreading knowledge on how to prevent CO from harming us.

Here are some directives from our Hero:

- * Have home heating systems (including hot water tanks) inspected and serviced annually by a trained technician;
- * Never use portable generators inside the home or garage or leave a car running inside an attached garage;
- * Never use a gas range or oven for heating;
- * Install CO alarms in your home outside separate sleeping areas. Be sure to change the batteries every 6 months.



The Farmer's Almanac has predicted that this winter will be snowy and frigid. Slip and fall hazards abound, so make sure to bundle up and be careful out there. Have a happy and *safe* Holiday Season.